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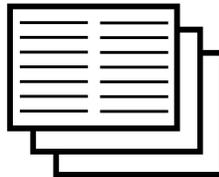
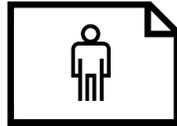
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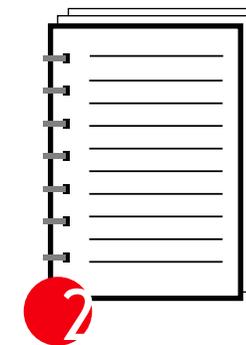
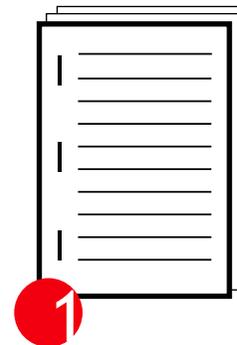
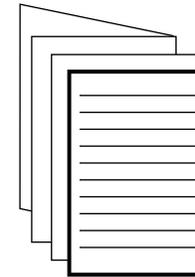
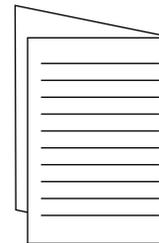
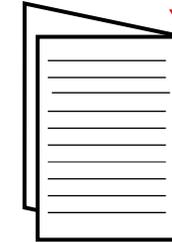
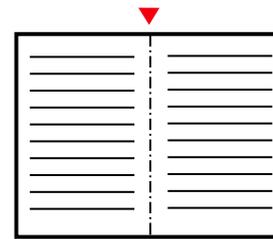
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assembling the guide



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THE VENICE CITY GUIDE



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Summary



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History and culture



Venice: Palazzo Ducale

"Without streets and vehicles, the uproar of wheels, the brutality of horses, and with its little winding ways where people crowd together, where voices sound as in the corridors of a house where the human step circulates as if it skirted the angles of furniture and shoes never wear out, the place has the character of an immense collective apartment, in which Piazza San Marco is the most adorned corner".

Henry James, The Aspern Papers

The first human settlements on the Venice Lagoon islands date back to the 5th and 6th centuries, when the inhabitants from the mainland came to this semi-swamp area to escape the **barbaric invasions** that followed the fall of the Roman Empire. The populations coming from mainland Venice settled in the lagoon, fighting as hard as they could to survive: little by little this group of pieces of land surrounded by water took on the semblance of a real town, a town that was so unique and special that it would become the only one of its kind in the world.

Chioggia (1380). Venice then realized that it was necessary for the city to have bases on the mainland too and began to expand towards Padua, Vicenza, Verona, Brescia and Bergamo. Venice's prestige grew at the same rate as the increase in the land it controlled and was thus given the name of **Serenissima**. However, danger was round the corner: the Serenissima was so busy expanding on the mainland that it did not realize that the Turks' power was expanding rapidly, to the point where they took over Constantinople (Byzantium) and some cities on the Greek and Albanian coastlines.

The **League of Cambrai** was founded in 1508: this was a sort of coalition against Venice which most of the European powers joined. Venice managed to maintain some of its land after seven years of war, but it lost its control over the Mediterranean.

In the 17th century, the Serenissima had to give up Crete, one of its historical lands and the whole of the Peloponnesus area to the Turkish Empire. In the period that followed, Venice's political power was seriously damaged but there was a considerable increase of the arts and literature in the city, which gave rise to the creation of works of art by **Tiepolo**, **Pietro Longhi** and **Canova** and to theatre plays by **Carlo Goldoni**.

In 1797, **Napoleone Bonaparte** conquered Venice, and sacked the whole area, just as he did in the rest of the country. A short while later the Emperor handed over the city to **Austria**, a ruler that was never accepted by the Venetians: in **1848**, the Austrians were run out of the city by a group led by **Daniele Manin**, and the second **Republic of Venice** was proclaimed. This new republic did not last for long, however, as Venice was annexed to the new **Kingdom of Italy** in **1866**.

The new inhabitants built several rafts of various sizes, supported by strong wooden poles that were fixed to the underside. The rafts were connected to each other with wooden walkways and houses, buildings and monuments were then built on them.

When Venice had a big enough population to begin to deserve the title of city, it was then annexed to the Byzantine Empire, while maintaining its own independence. In 697, Venice elected its first **Doge**, giving life to a new government: the **Dogado** (Maritime Empire). However, the event that finally made Venice's name in the world took place in 828, when two enterprising Venetian merchants stole the Apostle Mark's body from Alexandria in Egypt, and secretly transported it to Venice. A huge church, consecrated in 1094, was built to house the remains of the Saint, who then became the patron saint of the city: the Basilica of San Marco.

Since the very beginning, Venice showed strong inclinations towards **trade**. This increased to the point that at the end of the 11th century, the city set up close trading connections with Byzantium. This was the start of the **Republic of Venice**, which was finally consecrated in 1202 through the **4th crusade** that saw the conquering of Byzantium and then the islands in the Aegean and Ionian Seas. The eastern city was sacked and the booty was taken to Venice, where it was used to decorate churches and palaces. The four bronze horses that still adorn the main facade of the Basilica of San Marco were also part of that booty.

After the 4th crusade, Venice gained a strong political role due to the fact that it now controlled a large part of the Mediterranean and it also increased its military power and its trading.

The city's historical rivalry with Genoa exploded under the form of four wars that were fought one after the other until a truce was finally agreed at the end of 1381, when Venice beat Genoa in the famous **Battle of**

Interesting facts



Venice: the rising water

The rising water

In the fall, especially in October and November, it very often happens that the tide rises and the water overflows the banks of the canals, flooding the city: the foundations, the alleyways, the fields, the ground floor of the houses, the churches and the shops. The rising water is a problem for the Venetians but it is an unusual, exciting experience for tourists as it is a unique event. Seeing Piazza San Marco flooded by a still lake of water is most certainly a unique, magical moment, which has been immortalized several times over the years by famous photographers.

The names of the calli, campi and campielli (lanes, squares and little squares in Venice)

The Venetian *Calli* have unusual names that are usually either taken from the city's history or from an event that took place right on the very spot, or from the jobs of the people who lived in that lane or square. The names of the streets are written on small white squares that are placed on the outside of the buildings and that are called "nizioleti" (tissues).

Gondolas

Gondolas are one of Venice's most famous symbols worldwide. This typical Venetian boat is extremely ancient and is the result of a series of extremely complex craft techniques. A gondola is 11 meters long and weighs 600 kilograms. In spite of its considerable weight it is quite easy to maneuver by just one person using a single oar. We recommend you visit the **Squero** (boatyard) at **San Trovaso** where gondolas are still made today by the master craftsmen using the ancient techniques.

How to get there and how to get around



Venice: view of two columns in San Marco Square

There are several ways of getting to Venice:

By car

The Ponte della Libertà bridge connects Venice to the mainland and ends at Piazzale Roma, the only part of the city where cars can enter.

There are several indoor and outdoor car parks in Piazzale Roma that vary in the parking fees asked: find the fees they apply and choose one that is most convenient for you. You can also park at the Tronchetto, which you reach by turning right immediately at the end of the Ponte della Libertà bridge, just before you get to Piazzale Roma. At the Tronchetto there are some indoor and outdoor car parks.

You can get to the city center easily from both these points by vaporetto (the Venice water buses), water taxi or on foot.

By plane

You can get to the city from the "Marco Polo" airport in various ways: by water taxi, by the Alilaguna motor boat or using the "Venezia Air Terminal" bus.

By train

If you come to Venice by train, you will arrive at the Santa Lucia Railway Station, a large building located at the beginning of the Grand Canal in the Santa Croce area of the city. It is easy to reach the city center on foot walking down the Strada Nuova or by taking the water bus from one of the jetties that are opposite the station.

... how to get around

At a first glance, Venice may seem a kind of complicated labyrinth, but you will be able to move around easily by following our information and hints.

The old city center is divided into six areas known as **sestieri**: **Castello**, **Cannaregio**, **San Marco**, **Santa Croce**, **Dorsoduro**, **San Polo**. Some islands are also part of the city: **Giudecca** and **San Giorgio**, that can be seen from **Piazza San Marco**, the islands of **Murano**, **Burano**, **Torcello** and the **Lido**, home to Venice's beaches and where it is possible to go by car, taking the ferry from the Tronchetto.

There are many water buses and motorboats to take you quickly to any place in Venice. The vaporetto lines 1 and 82 travel along the Grand Canal from Piazzale Roma to the Lido, allowing passengers to view the wonderful buildings that stand alongside the Canal until it reaches the San Marco Basilica, where it is possible to catch a glimpse of the wonderful, majestic Piazza San Marco.

An interesting way to cross the **Grand Canal** from one side to the other is by using the gondola ferry, that is cheap but very picturesque.

These ferries can be found at various points on the Grand Canal: from Santa Maria del Giglio to the Salute and vice versa (until 1 pm); from Ca' Rezzonico to Palazzo Grassi and vice versa (until 1 pm); from Riva del Vin to the Town Hall and vice versa (until 1 pm); from the Rialto Market to Strada Nova and vice versa (up to 7.45 pm); from San Marcuola to Fontego dei Turchi and vice versa (until 1

pm); from the train station to San Simeone and Giuda and vice versa (until 1 pm).

Getting around the city on foot is however the most efficient and charming way of getting to know the city. The numbers of the streets in Venice starts with 1 in each *Sestiere* and goes upwards progressively.

Here is a **short glossary** that will help you to understand the indications written on the street signs that you will find in the city:

Calle: the typical pedestrian street that can be streta (narrow), wide or longa (lunga);

Campo: an open space that is known as a square in other towns. In Venice, however, there is only 1 square: San Marco;

Campielo: a small square where there is no church;

Fondamenta: a pedestrian path that runs alongside the canals and that can be of various sizes;

Ruga: a variation of the French word "rue", a busy road with a lot of houses and shops;

Rio: a small internal canal. When the word "Rio" is followed by the word "terà" (filled in) it means that this is a road;

Salizada: the largest roads, the first to have been asphalted;

Sotoportego: this is a dialect term for the inside of a portico.

Churches



Venice: Basilica della Salute

All the best churches in Venice, divided into city areas. Including the Basilica of San Marco and the Church della Salute....

Santa Croce

Church of San Simeon Piccolo

This imposing church is located opposite the Santa Lucia train station.

The Church of San Simeon Piccolo was built at the beginning of the 18th century and was intended to be a copy of the Pantheon in Rome; this is why it has a large green dome, with the statue of San Salvatore on the top. This building has been used as an auditorium for concerts for some time now.

Church of Santo Stae

The Church of San Stae was built on the wishes of the Doge Alvise Mocenigo around 1709.

Its façade is full of marble decorations and inside there are several paintings. The sculptors involved in producing these decorations were Tarsia, Torretto, Baratta and Gropelli. The designer and the builder

of the church interior was the architect Giovanni Grassi. The church has a central aisle, a vaulted ceiling and three chapels on each side.

San Polo

Church of San Giacometto

Popular tradition considers the church of San Giacometto to be the oldest church in Venice. It was built thanks to the belief and talent of a carpenter from Crete around the 5th century, just when the first people settled on this group of islands.

The church is very small but very pretty and charming. There is a large clock on the façade, built in 1410.

Church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari

This large Gothic church, Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari is one of the most imposing religious buildings in Venice.

It was built by the minor monks of the Franciscan order, known as Frari, thanks to a donation from the Doge Jacopo Tiepolo. The first version of the church was completed in 1338, and was much smaller than the current one.

Other donations from important Venetian families provided for the church to be expanded and decorated. However, this church was demolished at the beginning of the 15th century to build a new one, using an enormous amount of bricks dotted with white marble decorations.

The severe, imposing façade is built in a late Gothic style and is divided into three parts with Venetian-Byzantine capital-topped pillars.

The interior is just as magnificent: the church is built on a Latin cross pattern, with a central aisle and side aisles, divided by twelve massive pillars. There are many works of art by important painters such as Tiziano, Palma il Giovane and Piazzetta in the church. The ancient convent and oratory house the

city's archives: there are 15 million volumes that contain the Serenissima's entire history.

Dorsoduro

Basilica della Salute

On October 22nd 1630, during the terrible plague that struck Venice, the Doge Nicolò Contarini publicly declared that a church would be built in the name of Health (salute) as a vow to end the scourge. A year later, in 1631, the plague was wiped out and the Basilica della Salute was opened in 1687.

Eleven plans for the church were presented and the one designed by **Baldassare Longhena** was chosen. The design included a huge façade that reminds one of the Palladium, with a wonderful huge door in the center. The façade was lifted with a number of steps to give the church an even greater sense of grandeur. The interior is incredibly charming due to the severe majesty of its size. It has the central area on an octagonal plan. On the sides, there are a corresponding number of arches divided up by columns. There are a number of works of art inside the church too: Pentecost, San Rocco and San Sebastiano, David and Goliath and Cain and Abel by Tiziano; The Marriage of Canaan by Tintoretto and Jonah and Samson by Palma il Giovane.

Castello

Church of Santa Maria Formosa

The Church of Santa Maria Formosa is one of the eight churches built in the 7th century by San Magno, the Bishop of Oderzo. Legend goes that the Virgin Mary appeared to him in the form of a shapely, matron. The church was built several times over the centuries: in 1668 the church was rebuilt after it was damaged during an earthquake and after several renovations, the last reconstruction of the entire building was carried out in the

period 1916 to 1921, using funds provided by the government and by Count Venier. The Baroque church tower was built in 1668 and was designed by Francesco Zucconi. The façade of the church that faces the canal was built using money donated by the Cappello family, in honor of Captain Vincenzo Cappello, who defeated the Turks. The church's interior was decorated by Mauro Coducci and is built according to the Latin cross pattern over the previous Greek cross foundations. It has a central aisle and side aisles, a choir, transepts with cross vaults and a hemispherical dome. The church is also home to some wonderful paintings by Bartolomeo Vivarini, Palma il Giovane and Palma il Vecchio.

Church of the Santissimi Giovanni and Paolo

The Church of the Santissimi Giovanni and Paolo is dedicated to the two Roman brothers who became martyrs in Rome in the 2nd century. In 1234, the order of Dominican monks began to build this church which was then finished almost two centuries later. This large church is built in religious Gothic style. Its façade is built in three parts, with a central rose and two round side openings. The lower part of the façade is decorated with a series of Gothic arches and two sarcophaguses of Marco Michiel and Daniele Marco Bon, on the right and of the Doge Jacopo Tiepolo and his son Lorenzo on the left. The church interior is built on a Latin cross pattern. It is full of Doges' and other important figures' funeral monuments and also contains works of art by Lombardo, Piazzetta and other artists from the Bellini school.

Church of San Francesco della Vigna

Tradition says that the name of this pretty church comes from the vineyards that were given to the Minor Monks by Marco Ziani, the son of the Doge Pietro, in 1253. This was the land that a monastery was built on. In 1534 the church was built in place of the monastery. It was designed by Sansovino who supervised

the building work himself. The façade was built at a later date (1568-1577) following a design by Andrea Palladio. Two bronze statues by Tiziano Aspetti are in the niches in the façade: on the left there is a statue of Moses and on the right there is a statue of San Paolo. The Interior of San Francesco della Vigna is built on a Latin cross pattern, with a central aisle, side chapels, a higher altar and a deep choir. The church contains works by Palma il Giovane, including the "Vergine e il Bambino" and the "Adorazione della Vergine in Gloria".

Church of San Giorgio Dei Greci

The Church of San Giorgio dei Greci was built starting from 1539, as soon as the Greeks obtained permission to build a church and a school from the Republic. The Church of San Giorgio dei Greci was completed by Chianantonio and was consecrated in 1561. The church's interior is truly magnificent: the hemispherical dome is worthy of note, with its center covered in frescoes by G. di Cipro.

Church of the Pietà

The church was built in the 15th century according to a design by Giorgio Massari and was consecrated in 1760. The building is one of the elegant and striking from the 7th century. There is a wonderful fresco by Tiepolo on the ceiling of the main entrance: *Fortitudine e Pace*, one of this greatest masterpieces. The frescoes that adorn the choir ceiling, which make up the Trionfo della Fede, are also worthy of note. Here Tiepolo has excelled himself, painting the Glory of Paradiso.

San Marco

Basilica of San Marco

This wonderful church was built in 829 to contain the remains of Saint Mark, the city's patron saint and was consecrated in 1024. It has been renovated and decorated several times over the centuries and the Basilica is most certainly the most spectacular church

in the city. Its main façade is unique. It has five arched doorways, a long terrace that are home to four bronze horses that came from the booty from the 4th crusade of the infidels. Its bas-relief work is in Byzantine style. The interior is just as sumptuous as the outside. The marble floor has a striking geometric pattern and there are splendid mosaics on the walls that tell stories from the New Testament.

San Marco Bell Tower.

The San Marco Bell Tower was built in the 9th century. It was originally used as a lookout tower and as a lighthouse. It was rebuilt in 1100 and it was then completed in the 16th century under the guidance of the architect Bon. It was rebuilt in a Renaissance style while maintaining the original structure. In 1902, the bell tower fell down but fortunately there were no tragic consequences. Venice decided to rebuild it "as it was and where it was" and 10 years later the new bell tower, an exact copy of the original, was ready: the tower is square, built in brick. It is 12 meters wide and 98.6 meters high and is closed on top with a pyramid-shaped point. On the top there is a golden angel about 2 meters high. The bell tower has played an essential role in the political and social life of the city for centuries. The bells were rung to inform the city's inhabitants of all the main events organized in Venice. At the foot of the bell tower there were popular wine sellers who moved around to stay under the bell tower's shade depending on the time of day. This ancient custom is where the term that the Venetians use for a glass of wine comes from: ombra (shade in Italian).

Cannaregio

Church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli

The Church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli is almost hidden in between two ancient palaces. It was built between 1481 and 1489

by Lombardo to protect the sacred image of the "Vergine tra due Santi", that was first kept in Angelo Amadi's tabernacle who lived in a courtyard nearby and which is now subject to pilgrimages and donations. The church's façade is completely covered in marble that, so tradition says, comes from the remains of the work on the Basilica of San Marco. The church's interior is decorated in hues of pale pink, silver, grey and white and there is still the original bas-relief work with mermaids, the God Triton, animals, flowers and other pictures. The "Vergine tra due Santi" stands above the church's altar.

Church of the Santissimi Apostoli

The ancient Church of the Santissimi Apostoli stands in Campo dei Santi Apostoli, where it was built in the 9th century. The current building is the result of lots of renovation work carried out during the 18th century. Legend has it that the spot on which the Church stands was one of the first places in Venice where refugees from the mainland came to live. There are several wonderful frescoes inside the church: The "Comunione di Santa Lucia" by Tiepolo and the large panel painted by Francesco Canal that is on the ceiling, showing the Communion of the Apostles, the Celebration of the Eucharist and four ovals to the side showing the Evangelists.

The Jesuits' Church

The church's façade is a perfect example of Baroque style from the beginning of the 18th century. The church is built to a Latin cross and the columns inside are topped by statues of the twelve Apostles created by various sculptors during the 17th and 18th centuries. The church also contains frescoes by Palma il Giovane, Tiziano and Sansovino. After the Jesuit Order was suppressed in 1773, the convent was used as a public school and then as army barracks in 1807. The Church was handed back to the Jesuits when the Order was reinstated by Pius VII in 1814.

Church of the Madonna dell'Orto

The Church of the Madonna dell'Orto was built around the middle of the 15th century by Fra' Tiberio da Parma and took the name of Madonna dell'Orto due to the ancient picture of the Virgin that was found in a garden nearby and which was then taken to the church. Building on the church lasted for about one century and the result was extremely worthy of note: the façade is still the best example today of Venetian Gothic architecture from the 15th century. The row of niches that were originally galleries that ran down the wings of the building, now hold the statues of the twelve Apostles. Inside there is a nave with no transept and side aisles with chapels that are separated by two rows of Greek marble columns. The picture of the "Vergine con Bambino" that gives the church its name hangs alongside the Chapel of San Mauro and is a fine example of art work from the 14th century made from soft stone. Inside there are frescoes by Palma il Giovane, Ponzzone and Tintoretto.

Buildings and monuments



Venice: Basilica della Salute

The historical buildings and most important monuments in Venice, from Palazzo Ducale to the Rialto Bridge...

Santa Croce

Fondaco dei Turchi

This building was originally built at the beginning of the 13th century by Giacomo Palmieri, the consul of Pesaro on the Atlantic coast, who fled to Venice where he founded one of the greatest noble families in the city: the Pesaro family.

In 1621, the Pesaro family rented the palace to Ottoman merchants and from then on the palace was known as the Fondaco dei Turchi (the Turks' Warehouse).

Later, when trade with the East began to decline, the palace was abandoned by the Ottomans and fell into ruin. In 1880, the Venice City Council bought the Fondaco and renovated it, whilst maintaining the characteristics of the original buildings, i.e. its Venetian-Byzantine façade covered in marble. This building has been the home of

the Natural History Museum in Venice since 1924.

Ca' Mocenigo

The Mocenigo family, from Lombardia, settled in Venice a long time ago and became one of the symbols of the city itself. One of the family branches lived at San Stae, where one of the most striking buildings in Venice was built: Ca' Mocenigo, built with a main entrance known as a "portego" in the central block. The building now belongs to the City Council and can still be admired in all its glory with the original eighteenth century furnishings and decorations. Palazzo Mocenigo also houses the Vittorio Cini collection of curtains, hangings and religious fabrics.

San Polo

The Rialto Bridge

The Rialto Bridge was originally the only permanent connection between the two banks of the Grand Canal. It is said that in 1172, a bridge made from barges was designed, which was then replaced with a bridge with wooden columns a few years later. This bridge was destroyed in 1310. In 1444, a new wooden bridge was built that was much bigger than the previous one and which even had shops on it.

The final stone version of the Rialto Bridge, as we know it today, was built in the period 1588-1591 by Antonio da Ponte. Building the bridge was difficult due to the instability of the site and its height (8 meters).

The House of Carlo Goldoni

Carlo Goldoni, the famous Venetian playwright, was born in 1707 at Palazzo Centani, located alongside Ponte San Tomà. The building has a façade with a pointed arch that faces the canal and can be seen from the bridge. It has a wonderful courtyard and an open air staircase. A committee of citizens bought the house in 1914, following

an idea by Aldo Ravà who was a famous fan of Venetian culture. A center for the preservation of the artists papers was then created there. The buildings have been the home of the Institute of Theatrical Studies (Istituto degli Studi Teatrali) since 1952. The theater section of the Correr Museum Library is also housed there.

Carlo Goldoni's most famous plays, written and acted in dialect, are: *I Rusteghi* (1760), *The Villeggiatura* trilogy (1761) and *Le Baruffe Chiozzotte* (1762).

Scuola Grande di San Rocco

The Scuola Grande di San Rocco is a majestic building made from white marble, designed by the architects Bon and Scarpagnino around 1400. It was declared a School in 1489 by the Concilio dei Dieci. The carvings on the façade are very intricate and recall the typical style of the Venetian sculptors from the mid-15th century. The school played a role of helping the poor and protecting the city's artistic assets. When the Marine Republic fell from power, the School was left to rack and ruin and most of the holy decorations were stolen. The School was reopened for religious services in 1806, thanks to some donations from rich citizens. It once again took on its role to help the poor, in spite of the fact that it did not have many financial resources. Works by Tintoretto, Tiziano, Tiepolo and Giorgione, all illustrating the bible, can still be seen inside the school.

San Marco

Palazzo Ducale

This exceptional building was the center of Venice's political, social and economic life right from the beginning. Palazzo Ducale was the private residence of the Doge, but it was also the home of the Government's and the Courts' main offices. There is some proof that the original building dates back to the first half of the 9th century, a building that was

then changed through several renovations that were carried out over the centuries. Substantial changes were made in 1173, during the rule of the Doge Sebastiano Ziani, and the palace was expanded. However, in 1340, the building took on a truly grandiose size when the Gothic style wing was built that faces the San Marco bay, where the Greater Council meetings were held. The portico supported by the large columns and the upper open gallery that face the bay are wonderful. The Gothic-style **Porta della Carta**, the entrance of honor to the palace, dates back to the 15th century. It was given this name as the proclamations issued by the Republic were attached to this door.

The rooms inside the palace are full of frescoes depicting the history of the Republic by Masters such as Tiepolo, Tiziano, Veronese, Bassano and Palma il Giovane, all kept in valuable golden wooden frames.

The "Procuratie" and the Napoleonic wing
Piazza San Marco is bordered on the right and on the left sides by the **Procuratie**, which are connected by the Napoleonic Wing. There are now several shops under the porticoes, the famous Café Florian and Café Quadri and there are also some luxurious Venetian jewelers such as Nardi and Missaglia. Both the Procuratie, the Old and the New one have galleries over the 50 arches of the ground floor portico. The third side of the square, the one that faces the Basilica, is taken up by the Napoleonic Wing. This is a building in Neo-classical style, built on the wishes of Napoleon in 1807. In order to build a ballroom, Napoleon ordered for the ancient Church of San Geminiano to be knocked down. The Napoleonic Wing now houses the Correr Museum collection.

The **Torre dell'Orologio** (the Clock Tower) is also located on the side of the old Procuratie. There is also the archway that takes you to the **Mercerie**. The tower is topped by a terrace where there is a large bell and two bronze statues known as the "Mori". The

clock is underneath the statues. The clock face is gold and blue enamel and shows the time, the lunar phases and the zodiac signs.

Scala Contarini known as "del Bovolo"

Near Campo San Bortolo, hidden among a labyrinth of alleyways, there is one of Venice's most unusual sites: Scala Contarini, known as "del Bovolo", which was built around the 17th century. This strange name was given to it due to its strange spiral shape that reminds one of a snail, which in Venetian dialect is Bovolo. The staircase winds up Palazzo Contarini façade and is seen as a high cylindrical tower from where you get a charming view of Venice' rooftops.

Cannaregio

Ca' d'Oro

Palazzo Ca' d'Oro, now home of the Franchetti Gallery, is one of the main attractions of Venetian Gothic architecture, built at the beginning of the 15th century on the wishes of Marini Contarini. The name of Ca' d'Oro (The Golden home) comes from the wealth of gold leafing that once decorated its façade. The original project was probably by the architect Marci D'Amadio, but the work was carried out by Lombard craftsmen and then later by Venetian ones. Ca' d'Oro changed owner several times and was finally bought and renovated by the Baron Giorgio Franchetti in the 19th century. He then donated his own collection of paintings and this building to the State in 1916. In 1927, the palace was turned into a museum that now houses several works of art by Tiziano and Tintoretto and some Gothic and Renaissance furniture.

Dorsoduro

Ca' Rezzonico

Ca' Rezzonico is a large building that looks down onto the Grand Canal and which is now home to the Eighteenth Century Museum in

Venice. The original design of the building was commissioned by the Priuli-Bon family and was carried out by Baldassare Longhena during the first half of the 17th century. Around 1745, another floor was added to the building, just as the Rezzonico family, the new owners of the building, wished. Some classical elements have been used on the façade, as they were much in fashion at the time. They match the rooms and the interior decorating. The large staircase can be reached from the entrance hall on the ground floor: this is one of the most magnificent entrances in the entire city. Ca' Rezzonico was bought by the English poet Robert Browning and then by the Baron Hirschel de Minerby, the last private owner. The building was then acquired by the City Council (1925) and was turned into a museum.

Museums



Venice: Basilica della Salute

The most interesting museums in Venice, divided into city areas, from the Galleria dell'Accademia to the Peggy Guggenheim Museum...

Santa Croce

The Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of Oriental Art.

The Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of Oriental Art in Venice are housed in the wonderful seventeenth-century building known as **Ca' Pesaro**, a true example of Venetian Baroque style, designed in 1628 by Baldassare Longhena. The Modern Art Gallery has an interesting collection of paintings and sculptures by nineteenth and twentieth century artists such as: Kilmnt, Chagall, Kandinsky, Klee, Matisse, Moore, Mirò, Morandi, De Chirico, Rodin. On the second floor there is a large collection of oriental art pieces, divided into two sections: China and Indonesia on one side and Japan on the other.

Dorsoduro

Peggy Guggenheim Museum

The Peggy Guggenheim Museum is a foundation that is housed inside Palazzo Venier dai Leoni, a typical building with just one floor that looks out onto the Grand Canal. In 1954 Peggy Guggenheim (1898-1979), a collector and patron of many modern artists, bought the building to live in, transferring her own collection of sculptures and paintings by artists such as Mirò, Magritte, Boccioni, Picasso, Chagall, Mondrian, Kandinsky, Ernst, Dali.

Today these works of art can be visited at the Peggy Guggenheim Foundation, the best Museum of Modern Art in Venice: 400 works of art, including paintings and sculptures.

Academy

The Academy of Fine Arts was set up on September 24th 1750, headed first by Piazzetta and then by Tiepolo.

In 1807, a true art gallery was set up inside it, that served two purposes: it offered important models for the Academy's students and also housed the artistic inheritance left by the public buildings that were dismantled after the Venice Marine Republic fell from power.

At the end of the Second World War, the architect Carlo Scarpa redesigned the Academy.

There is a full range of existing Venetian paintings inside.

The original collection has been added to with religious artifacts, private heirlooms, restored paintings and paintings that were bought elsewhere.

When you come out of the main entrance of the Academy you can see the dell'Accademia Bridge, one of the three bridges, together with the Rialto and the degli Scalzi bridges, that cross over the Grand Canal.

Castello

Arsenale (The Shipyards)

The Venice Arsenale were built around 1104 and was then extended over three centuries, to a point where they took up a large area of the Castello sestiere.

The Arsenale are made up of a set of buildings from where the Venetian war and merchant fleets set off.

The entire shipyard area was surrounded by high walls, protected by square towers that had winged lions on the top.

The large archway at the entrance was built by A. Gambello when the Doge Pasquale Malipiero (1460) ruled the Republic.

Above the main door there is a stone statue of a winged lion with a sword and bible that is open on the words "pax tibi Marce evangelista meus" (may peace be with you, Mark, my evangelist), which is the symbol of Venice.

In 1682 a terrace was built from where it is possible to see the square below and there are eight allegorical stone statues on the rails of gods and goddesses.

When the shipyards were at their busiest, there were 16,000 men working in these yards, who were given the name *Arsenalotti*.

They were divided into teams of joiners, sawyers and stucco decorators who could prepare up to six large trading galleys ships every two years.

In the 14th century, many warehouses were built to make and store ropes and rigging: one of these was called "la Tana".

Hemp plants were separated inside "la Tana", which were then used to make strong ropes by the master rope makers.

Venice was the main naval center on the Adriatic Sea until 1797.

The Serenissima came to an end following the Napoleonic wars and the Austrian occupation, and the shipyards were slowly abandoned.

Today it is possible to see models of the Serenissima ships in the Venice Shipyards museum.

San Marco

Correr Museum

The Correr Museum, which is located in the **Napoleonic Wing** of Piazza San Marco and in a part of the **Procuratie**, houses several items and findings that tell the story of Venetian art and history. In the part of the museum that takes up the magnificent Neoclassical rooms of the Napoleonic Wing there is a wonderful collection of sculptures by Canova. The part of the museum that is in the new Procuratie holds an exhibition showing various aspects of the city: it is possible to observe the Serenissima trading and the traditional Venetian festivals.

Places and charm



Venice: the Bridge of the Sighs

The most charming places that can be discovered walking around the city: from Piazza San Marco to the Ghetto...

San Marco

Piazza San Marco

Piazza San Marco is the only "Piazza" in Venice, as all the other squares are given the name "Campo". From the very beginning, Piazza San Marco was designed and built as an extension of **Palazzo Ducale** and the **San Marco Basilica**, the true centers of political and social life in Venice. The space originally taken up by the square was rather narrow and had a canal running through it: the Rio Batario. In 1172, the Doge Sebastiano Ziani bought the whole area and reclaimed the canal. He then had extension work started which ended in the Piazza San Marco that we now know today.

Opposite the Palazzo Ducale, and in place of the old wharf, a small square was created where two tall columns coming from Constantinople were installed. A winged lion

was placed on one column, which is the symbol of Venice, and on the other column there was a statue of San Teodoro, the old patron saint of Venice, who was then replaced by San Marco. The larger part of the square that stretches out in front of the Basilica, is 170 meters long and is trapezium shaped. The edge of the square is bordered by the old and new *Procuratie*, and the Napoleonic Wing which is now the home of the **Correr Museum**.

The Bridge of Sighs

This is one of the most popular tourist sights in Venice. The bridge connects the Palazzo Ducale, where prisoners were tried, to the prisons known as the Piombi. The bridge was built on the orders of the Doge Mario Grimani and was made in stone from Istria. It was decorated on the outside with Baroque patterns. The beauty of the structure has given the bridge a romantic connotation in complete contrast to its actual use. The sighs that the bridge inspired were definitely not sighs from people in love, but from the prisoners who had just been sentenced to years in jail in the terrible "piombi".

Merceria

The *Merceria* cut the old city center into two parts, connecting Piazza San Marco to Rialto. This is Venice's main thoroughway, the heart of the city's commercial trade since ancient times when the precious fabric shops stayed open until late. The Mercerie are divided into three parts: Mercerie dell'orologio (that starts from Piazza San Marco), Mercerie de San Zulian and Mercerie di San Salvador, that come out right on Campo San Salvador, next to Campo San Bortolo. All the Mercerie are full of shops and boutiques of all kinds: from luxury jewelers such as Cartier and Rolex to fashion boutiques such as Sergio Rossi for shoes and Krizia for clothes.

Cannaregio

The Jewish Ghetto

The Venice Ghetto was the first to be set up in Europe and was founded in 1516, further to laws issued by the Serenissima: The Venetian Jews had to live inside the area bordered by the Ghetto Bridge, and could not leave the area from dusk until dawn.

Guards were placed at the Ghetto boundaries to control the Jews' movements and the Ghetto was closed at night with gates. The hinges of those gates can still be seen today.

The word "ghetto" comes from the word "getto", the noun coming from the Italian verb "gettare": before the area was made into a residence for Jews, the copper foundries were based here and "gettare" is the dialect word used to explain the work carried out in the foundries.

There are 5 synagogues that look out onto Campo del Ghetto: the Canton Synagogue, the Italian Synagogue, the German Synagogue, the Levantine Synagogue and the Spanish Synagogue.

The Campo is also surrounded by tall buildings that have up to 8 floors: This is a unique aspect of the buildings compared to all the others in Venice.

Dorsoduro

Zattere

The Zattere walk is one of the most romantic and prettiest in Venice.

Fondamenta delle Zattere begins at San Basilio and continues alongside the Giudecca Canal, which runs parallel to the Grand Canal, and ends at the Punta della Salute where the old Sea Customs house is located, a truly charming, panoramic place from where you can see the whole of San Marco bay and San Giorgio island as far as the Lido.

San Polo

The Rialto Market

The famous Rialto Market has two parts to it: Erbaria and Pescaria. Erbaria is the fruit and vegetable market which is right under the Rialto Bridge, on the opposite side to Campo San Bortolo. Pescaria is the fish market and is just a short walk away, under the porticoes of a neo-Gothic building that looks out on the Grand Canal.

Eating and Drinking



Venice: fegato alla veneziana

Venetian cuisine, especially that in the city, is full of traditional dishes that are mostly made using all types of fish and vegetables, with only one limit: the seasons. Indeed it is hard to find dishes on the menus of the **restaurants in Venice** that have ingredients that are out of season.

We can begin our journey to discover Venetian food with **cicchetti** (hors d'oeuvres) that can be found in all the **bacari** (pubs) counters, that must be eaten with an **ombra** (glass) of wine. Typical Venetian **cicchetti** are: fried crab claws, meat balls, half boiler eggs with anchovies, fried vegetables, **moscardini** (tiny octopus) with **polenta**, **soppressa** with **polenta** and toasted bread with **creamed cod**, i.e. cooked in milk and then creamed. However, the best hors d'oeuvre by far are the **sardee in saor**: these are sardines cooked and marinated with onions and vinegar and flavored with raisins and pine nuts.

For pasta dishes, the Venetian cuisine has a lot of different specialties to offer. The risottos, made with **scampi** or **cuttlefish**, are famous, although the best known recipe is for **risi e**

bisi, the risotto made with peas that the Doges ate on San Marco's day. Pasta dishes included **spaghetti with clams**, **spaghetti with cuttlefish ink**, **bigoli in sauce** (bigoli are a sort of long thin pasta with a hole in the middle, with an anchovies and onions sauce), and the popular **pasta e fagioli**, a tasty winter pasta and bean soup that is served in both the pubs and in the best restaurants in Venice.

For main fish courses, we recommend you try the **scampi alla busara**, with tomato and chilli pepper, cooked in sauce and **cuttlefish cooked in sauce**, all accompanied by **polenta**. Fried **moeche** is also very popular; these are small crabs fished during the changeover period (spring and fall) when their shells are soft and edible. The most typical main meat course is **fegato alla veneziana**: this is soft veal liver stewed with a lot of onions.

An entire chapter is needed to talk of the **castraure**, the famous purple artichokes that are grown on the islands in the lagoon, especially on Sant'Erasmus. They are rare and precious, and were recently classified by Slow Food. They can be eaten in several different ways but only during the harvesting period, which runs from the end of April until the second half of June. All these wonderful dishes must be accompanied by Venetian wines: **Prosecco di Conegliano**, **Valpolicella**, **Bianco di Custoza** and **Amarone**. Finally, after the meal we recommend you try a

sgroppino (lemon sorbet and prosecco) or a small glass of **Bassano Grappa**. However, first you must try some typical Venetian sweets such as **zaeti**, biscuits prepared with **polenta** flour and raisins and **bussolai buranelli**, butter biscuits made in a round shape that are wonderful when dunked in sweet Vin Santo.

Shopping



Venice: venetian mask

Venice is a true paradise for real shopping fans: you can find everything in Venice, from souvenir shops with **Carnival masks** and **Murano glass** items, to the most luxurious high fashion boutiques.

The glass objects made in the kilns on the island of **Murano** by master glass blowers are an old tradition that are made using techniques that have been handed down over the centuries. The many glassworks in Venice and Murano offer any type of objects, for all tastes and wallets; there are **Venini** lamps and ashtrays, vases and small colored animals. With regards to jewelry, one popular souvenir is **la murrina**: this is a slim round pendant in colored glass with spiral or flower patterns that is hung on a gold or silver chain around your neck. As well as the traditional jewelers' shops in Venice there are also some shops that sell necklaces made with colored Venetian glass pearls, that can sometimes be bought loose too so that you can use them to make some personalized jewelry yourself.

While walking through the streets and lanes of Venice, you will also see a large number

of **mask shops**. This is another popular craft item in Venice which are made in terracotta or in pottery.

If you want to take some food home as a souvenir, you can also buy some packages of typical Venetian sweets, such as the **zaeti** that can be bought in one of the many cake shops in Venice.

Those of you who like to do famous name shopping can instead go on a tour of the fashion streets, the most important being the famous **Mercurie**: this is Venice's main shopping street that connects Piazza San Marco to Rialto and where you can find boutiques such as Max Mara, Sergio Rossi, Cartier, Krizia, Gucci, Louis Vuitton and many others too. **Calle XXII Marzo** is also well worth a visit: here you can find Bulgari, Bruno Magli, Versace, Damiani.

Hotels and lodgings



Venice: Rialto Bridge

Venice has a wide range of accommodation on offer: you can choose one of the **hotels in Venice** of all categories depending on your needs, from the one star to the luxurious five star hotels, **bed and breakfast establishments** in Venice or residence in Venezia Mestre, room rentals and period houses.

If you decide to organize a holiday in the period that goes from spring to the fall, you could also choose to experience a stay in one of the wonderful Liberty Villas that have been turned into **hotels on the Venice Lido**.

Another extremely charming area is the **Riviera del Brenta**: **hotels and bed & breakfasts** in the area are the ideal base for visiting all the architectural wonders of the Riviera.

If you working to a tight budget you can also opt for one of the several **hotels in Mestre**: 10 minutes from the old city center but considerably cheaper than the **hotels in Venice**.

Events



Venice: the Venice Carnival

Venice attracts visitors from all over the world thanks to its spectacular beauty and also thanks to the important international events that take place there, such as the Biennale and Film Festival. There is also the Venice Carnival, a period when it is difficult to find accommodation in Venice. It is therefore recommendable, if you are planning a trip to the city at the same time as one of these events, to book at least 1 or 2 months in advance in one of the **Venice hotels** or **Venice bed & breakfast establishments** that you have chosen.

The Venice Carnival February - March

This is a wild, enjoyable festival. Carnival has ancient origins and originally lasted for a long time: from December 26th to Ash Wednesday. In the past Carnival played an important social function: it created a temporary escape valve for the people who were strictly observed all year by the Doge's government. In this period they at least appeared to be free, dressing up and partying day and night.

Shows were put on in the squares and in

Piazza San Marco, especially on Jeudi and Mardi Gras, the most important days of Carneval. Carnevale reached the height of its magnificence in 1700 when it began to attract visitors from all over Europe. The "maschereri" were founded to meet the growing need for masks: they were true crafts experts for dressing up and created masks and heavy velvet cloaks for the occasion. The most fashionable mask was **Bauta**, a unisex costume made from a black tricorne hat, a white paper-mache mask that left the mouth uncovered for eating and drinking and a black cloak.

Carnevale is still celebrated in the open air today, with public shows and private parties organized in the Venetian palaces. People really let themselves go and there are many tourists around to watch, who either dress up or who just watch. The Venice Carnival has also invented some official sweetmeats: "fritole" (fried sweets) and "galani". "Fritole" can be made with raisins and pine nuts (from Venice) or using a rich custard or zabaione filling.

The Venice Biennale June - November

The first Venice Art Biennale took place in 1895, after the Palazzo dell'Esposizione was built in the Castello Gardens: The Italy Pavilion.

Works of art by great international painters such as Klimt and Renoir were shown at the Biennale in 1910 and the first national pavilions were prepared. These were due to multiply over the years, until they represented almost all the countries of the world.

In 1948 after the Second World War, the Biennale opened up again in grand style. It exhibited works by Chagall, Klee, Magritte and there was a retrospective exhibition of Picasso's work presented by Guttuso.

In 1980 the Architecture sector was set up. This occupied the area of the Shipyard's rope-making buildings. At a later point, the Art Biennale and the Architecture Biennale

decided to alternate each year, each allowing the other to use all the space available for their exhibits, including the Pavilions in the Shipyard gardens.

Festa del Redentore (The Redentore Festival)
the third Saturday and Sunday of July

This festival has its origins in a religious vow, just like the **Madonna della Salute**: During the first plague in 1576, the Doge promised to build a church dedicated to Christ the Saviour if the scourge that was destroying the city could be beaten.

The year after, on July 13th 1577, the plague finished, and the Senate decided to start up a city festival on the third Sunday of July each year. The Church of the Redentore (Savior) was built on the Giudecca island and a temporary bridge was built to it for the festival, to connect Zattere to Giudecca. This bridge has been assembled and dismantled every year since. However, the Redentore is not just a religious festival: whereas the Sunday is dedicated to a pilgrimage to the church and the mass celebrated by the Patriarch, the Saturday night is an event of a completely different kind. There is a fantastic fireworks display in the San Marco Bay. The fireworks are placed on rafts in the middle of the water and they light up the bay with a thousand colors. The Venetians wait for the fireworks on boats that are anchored in the middle of the bay and take food and drink with them. They wait until about 10 pm when the first explosions tell them the display is about to begin.

The Venice Film Festival August - September

Each year the Venice Lido is lit up by lights from all over the world. For ten days it is the center of world social life.

The International Film Festival in Venice was set up in 1932, thanks to the encouragement given by the Count Volpi di Misurata, who was the Chairman of the Venice Biennale at the time. The Film Festival started up again in

1946, after a forced break during the Second World War. This was a period characterized by Neorealism, and masterpieces such as "Paisà" by Roberto Rossellini (1946) and "La terra trema" by Luchino Visconti (1948) were shown in Venice for the first time. Later editions of the Festival took on a more international connotation, first on a European scale and then including countries such as the United States, Japan and India in the competition. In the nineteen sixties the Festival became the launch pad for the English Free cinema and the French nouvelle vague, reinforcing even more the Festival's international role.

The Festival continues to be an event that attracts a lot of visitors, both famous and non, amidst discussions and autograph hunters. They come from all over the world and provide the Venice Lido with a glossy, magical atmosphere.

Regata Storica (The Historical Regatta)
first Sunday of September

The historical Regatta is one of Venice's most spectacular and charming traditional festivals.

The competition was started in the first half of the 13th century and has been much-awaited event for the Venetians for centuries. This is a parade of characteristic historical boats from the sixteenth century, with the crews dressed in period costumes and led by the Bucintoro, the characteristic boat that represents the Serenissima. After the parade there is a competition on the Grand Canal, which is watched by Venetian fans and enthusiastic tourists.

Festa della Madonna della Salute
(The Madonna della Salute Festival)
November 21st

On November 21st each year in Venice, the Madonna della Salute festival takes place which is memory of the liberation of Venice from the terrible plague that struck the

city in the first half of the 17th century. This charming folk festival is centered around the Basilica della Salute, where church goers gather on a pilgrimage from all over the city, thanks to the temporary bridge that is built for the occasion with wooden rafts that cross the Grand Canal and which connect the area of San Moisè and Santa Maria del Giglio with the Basilica. On the day of the festival, tables are erected opposite the Basilica with all types of sweets on them and there are kiosks that sell candles to light in the church to pray for good health for relatives and friends.

La Dolce Vita



Venice: tourist in San Marco Square

There are lots of ways for anyone to enjoy themselves in Venice: you can sip an aperitif in one of the elegant coffee shops in **Piazza San Marco**, or you can listen to an opera at the **Gran Teatro La Fenice**, or discover the traditions tied to the Venetian "bacari".

For lovers of more sophisticated things, there is nothing better than to go for a pleasant break between museums to an aristocratic and historical place such as the Caffè Florian or the Quadri in Piazza San Marco or at Harry's Bar or Harry's Dolci della Giudecca. The Caffè Florian is situated under the portico of the new **Procuratie** and is considered to be one of the symbols of Venice. Since it was opened in 1720, the Caffè Florian has hosted many famous guests such as Goldoni, Lord Byron, Foscolo, Goethe, Dickens, Proust, D'Annunzio and Eleonora Duse, Rousseau, Stravinsky, Modigliani. The inner rooms are sumptuous: The Lounge of Mirrors, the Oriental Lounge, the Senate Lounge and the Liberty Lounge are nineteenth century treasures that can be admired while sipping some good coffee and tasting some dainty cakes. During the good

season you can also relax sitting outside, in the center of Piazza San Marco, listening to the music played by the Caffè's private orchestra.

Another historical bar is **Harry's Bar**, which was opened by **Giuseppe Cipriani** in 1931 in a small warehouse near San Marco that soon became one of the most famous restaurants in the world. Many artists and writers such as Hemingway and politicians and monarchs have appreciated Cipriani's cooking, all of whom then contributed to the bar's legend. Arrigo Cipriani, the inventor of the Bellini (a cocktail made from white wine and peach juice) made Harry's famous across the ocean too, and reached New York.

Lovers of the opera and ballet can go to shows at the **Gran Teatro la Fenice**, that was recently rebuilt "as it was and where it was" after a dreadful fire.

If you want a simpler kind of entertainment in a more informal location, we recommend you go on a tour of the "baccari": these typical Venetian pubs with wooden tables and benches are full of "cicchetti". Two of the most characteristic are "Do Spade" and il "Volto" where you can drink a famous "ombra" of wine, and drink in the truly authentic atmosphere.

If you want a place that is full of life, we advise you to go to the **Campo Santa Margherita** area that is the university and artists' area, and also the **Ghetto**, especially the nearby **Fondamenta della Misericordia** where there are ethnic restaurants, bars and historical night clubs such as "Paradiso Perduto".

An intense weekend



Venice: Rialto Bridge

A two-day itinerary dedicated to lovers of art, architecture and long walks in the open air. On the first day we will take you to discover the sestieri of Santa Croce, San Polo and Dorsoduro, and on the second day we will visit Castello, San Marco and Cannaregio.

First day

Our itinerary starts in the early morning from the **Santa Croce sestiere**, which is in the north west part of Venice. The eastern part of the **sestiere**, which is old and typically Venetian, is very important for trade as it connects Venice to the mainland.

We recommend you take the *vaporetto* no. 1 and get off at the San Stae stop from where you can easily visit all the important sights in the area. From the San Stae wharf you can also admire the façade of the **Ca' d'Oro** building that looks down onto the Grand Canal.

The first attraction you will see will be the beautiful **Church of San Stae** and then you will come across the old **Ca' Pesaro palace**, where the **Museum of Modern Art** and the **Museum of Oriental Art** are housed, and

where we recommend you spend some time.

After visiting the museums, you can walk to Campo San Polo, one of the largest squares in Venice. We are now in the **San Polo sestiere**, that is surrounded by the wide circle of the Grand Canal: this is one of the smaller sestieri in Venice, but it is also the liveliest in the city: **Rialto**. As tradition goes, from ancient times, Rialto was one of the liveliest centers on the Venetian islands, where the first inhabitants who had fled from the mainland concentrated their trade, taking advantage of the higher more stable land, safer against floods. Rialto was the most important center of the group of islands and Rivo Altus ("high Bank") was the name of the whole town up to the year 1000, when it then adopted the name Venice.

From Campo San Polo you can walk along the street opposite the church, lined with shops and little restaurants and you will find yourself in the middle of the **Rialto Market**, at the foot of the famous **Rialto Bridge**. After crossing the bridge, and admiring the view over the Grand Canal, you can carry on the right along the **Riva del Ferro** towards the vaporetto stops. Take the vaporetto no. 1 or no. 2 to the Lido and get off at the San Tomà stop. As you get off the vaporetto, follow the signs to Frari and you will find yourself at the imposing **Basilica dei Frari** in less than one minute. The pretty Campo San Rocco is next to the Frari. Here you can see the charming **Scuola Grande di San Rocco**.

It will now be lunchtime and this is an interesting area as far as food goes. Go towards **Santa Margherita** and once you get to the square, choose a restaurant or a pub where you can have something to eat and drink. You are now in the **Dorsoduro sestiere**, that covers the southern side of Venice, including the **Giudecca** island. This sestiere became the favorite area for foreign residents and artists from all over the world who came to the lagoon city for inspiration, starting from the 19th century.

After eating, go to the **Academy**, where

you can see the wonderful works of art by Tiziano and Tintoretto and where there is the third bridge over the Grand Canal, this one made from wood and metal. After seeing the seventeenth century art, you can see some modern paintings, looking at Picasso, Boccioni, Mondrian, Kandinsky and others at the **Peggy Guggenheim Museum**, which is housed in the amazing Palazzo Venier dai Leoni. Carry on in this quiet, aristocratic sestiere until you reach the **Basilica della Salute**, Longhena's masterpiece that looks down onto the final part of the Grand Canal. After you have visited the church carry on along the fondamenta until you get to the most panoramic point in Venice: The Dogana della Salute (also known as the Punta della Salute) where you can see San Marco bay, the Palazzo Ducale, Riva degli Schiavoni and the Island of San Giorgio with its wonderful Palladian church and where the Venetians "park" their boats, all in one go.

Le **Zattere**, the romantic walk begins just here at the Punta della Salute on the opposite side to the Basilica. If you walk along the Giudecca canal, parallel to the Grand Canal, you will enter into a unique, relaxing dimension, and will discover sensations that the Russian writer Iosif Brodskij described in "Fondamenta degli incurabili". The island of Giudecca is opposite you. This island's name has a special story, linked to its old function as a prison. The island took its name directly from a Canto of Dante's Divine Comedy for this very reason, a canto in which the last circle of Hell where traitors of well-doers are kept. This is called Giudecca.

If you want a rest, take the chance to taste the famous *gianduiotto* from the ice-cream parlor "Nico", you can sit outside on the tables on a large wooden raft on the canal. Not tired yet? Walk into the San Trovaso lanes, where there is the ancient Arts and Philosophy faculty and where you can find a typical trattoria in the area to eat. After dinner, why don't you return to **Campo Santa Margherita**, one of the busiest Venetian nightlife areas. There will be no problem getting back to your

hotel: the vaporetto buses continue their routes all night!

Second day

The second part of our itinerary starts from the **Castello sestiere**, more precisely from the **Arsenale**, where there are findings from the ancient glories of the Serenissima. Move on to the Riva degli Schiavoni from the Shipyards and then cut across towards the inner town, until you reach **Campo Santa Maria Formosa** where you can admire the wonderful church. The next stop is the **San Marco sestiere**, the smallest but also the most prestigious in Venice. **Piazza San Marco**, "the most beautiful lunge in the world", is the center of the sestiere. It is surrounded by wonderful works of art that cannot be missed such as: **Palazzo Ducale**, **Basilica di San Marco**, the **Belltower** and the **Procuratie** which house the interesting **Correr Museum**. You can choose one of the restaurants in the area for your lunch break between one visit and another, but we recommend two historical bars for your coffee, both of which area in Piazza San Marco. Florian and Quadri.

In the afternoon, take the vaporetto no. 1 from San Marco to Piazzale Roma and get off at the Ca' d'Oro stop in the **Cannaregio sestiere**. This, together with Castello, is the largest sestiere in Venice. As you come out of the wharf you will immediately see the entrance to the **Ca' d'Oro** palace on your left. This is one of Venice's prides. After visiting the palace go along the Strada Nuova until you reach Rio Terrà San Leonardo. Turn right when you get to the Guglie bridge and then right again until you get to the old **Jewish Ghetto**, one of the city's more charming places. On the opposite side of Campo del Ghetto there is the **Fondamenta della Misericordia** (or dell'Abbazia) where you can choose one of the countless restaurants to taste some authentic local food, and can end the evening in a club with live music.

Murano, Burano and Torcello: tours round the Lagoon islands



Venice: Murano

If you have an extra day to hand, why don't you visit the lagoon islands? Murano, Burano and Torcello: If you are well organized, these islands can be visited in one day; if you want more time, you can dedicate one day to Murano and Burano, go back to one of the **hotels in Venice** that you have chosen to stay in and then visit Torcello the day after.

Murano

The island of Murano became famous in 1291, the year in which the glass production was transferred here from the old city center due to fear of fires in the kilns. To get to the "glass island" you must go to **Fondamenta Nuove** where you can take a motor boat nos 41 or 42 that reaches the glass island in about 10 minutes.

You will catch a glimpse of the **San Michele island** while traveling between le Fondamenta Nuove and Murano. This is Venice's cemetery where famous people such as Stravinsky and Diaghilev are buried.

Once you get to Murano, get off at the Colonna stop and walk along the Fondamenta dei

Vetraì, where you can see the famous kilns lined up one after the other. Some of these are open to the public: choose one to watch the expert master glass blowers creating an object in glass. You can also buy blown glass things at the kilns directly. One of the oldest glassworks is **Venini**, a company that exhibits its own work in many Museums of Modern Art around the world. Just before the Vivarini Bridge you will see the **Church of San Pietro Martire** on your left, where there are some frescoes by Bellini, Tintoretto and del Veronese. Cross over the bridge and walk along the Fondamenta Cavour, where the **Glass Museum** is located, housing 4000 pieces that shown the development of glass blowing techniques over the centuries. One of the items on shown is the wonderful Barovier cup, made from enamel-painted blown glass and decorated with allegorical figures. Just a short walk from the museum there is also the **Basilica dei Santi Maria e Donato**, which was built in the 8th century. Here you can admire the Vergine Orante, a splendid mosaic that depicts the Virgin Mary. The Basilica also has a curious fact: the apse in Venetian Byzantine style is facing the Canal.

Burano

Burano can be reached from the Fondamenta Nuove or from the Murano Faro stop, taking the LN line.

Burano is one of the prettiest islands in the lagoon: it is a miniature Venice where all the houses are painted in bright colors. Burano is famous for its lace work, an art carried out since the sixteenth century and which is famous worldwide.

As soon as you get off the vaporetto, walk along Via Marcello and then turn right to the Fondamenta di San Mauro: You will soon come to Via Baldassare Galuppi that opens onto the square with the same name. Here you will find the **Lace Museum**, where you can see old pieces of lace and can watch the various stages of work carried out by the experts. In the square there is also the **Church of San**

Marino, which houses the “Crocefissione” painting by Tiepolo and also Palazzo del Podestà. We also advise you to pop into a cake shop on the island to taste the famous *bussolai buranelli*.

Torcello

It is possible to reach the island of Torcello from the Fondamenta Nuove, taking the line N vaporetto, or by taking the line T motor boat from Burano.

Torcello is an extremely romantic and charming place. Venetians love to go there once in a while as they are attracted by its calm and the greenness of the island. Unlike Murano and Burano, Torcello is practically uninhabited and still has a lot of archeological proof of its glorious past.

From the wharf, walk along the pleasant Fondamenta dei Borgognoni where you will immediately see the famous **Ponte del Diavolo** (the Devil’s Bridge). Further on there is Piazza Torcello, with its original grass flooring where you can see the wonderful, ancient **Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta**. A whole part of the interior of the church is a wonderful mosaic showing the Universal Judgement. There is also a pretty church, the Church of Santa Fosca in the square, and in front of it there is the famous **sedia di Attila**, the throne on which the tribunes once sat to administer justice. A short distance away we find the **Estuario Museum** that contains some interesting archeological finds from the Roman, Byzantine and Medieval periods. If you have the time, we recommend a romantic dinner at the Locanda Cipriani, one of the places that Hemingway loved most.

The Brenta Riviera



Venice: Villa Foscari in the Brenta Riviera

There is a truly charming, attractive location just a few kilometers from Venice: the Brenta Riviera, a pretty place full of artistic and cultural interest.

In the period running between the 16th and the 18th centuries, some of the most important families from Venice had their summer residences built on the Riviera that runs alongside the Brenta river, a waterway that connects Venice to Padua. The most famous architects and painters of the period, such as **Palladio** and **Tiepolo**, were hired to create what was to become the symbol of the aristocratic families grandeur and wealth: the **Venetian Villas**. Andrea Palladio created a type of architectural building that brought together Classical elements copied from the villas of the Roman Empire era and original characteristics such as the **barchessa**, a kind of annex that stood alongside the central part of the building.

Our itinerary includes all the most beautiful Venetian villas and can be completed in a one-day, right morning to evening trip that will eventually take you back to the **hotel in**

Venice that you have chosen. If you happen to have more time on your hands and you want to take longer visiting these Palladian masterpieces, you can use one of the several **hotels on the Brenta Riviera** (or a **bed & breakfast place**) as your base and divide this itinerary into several days.

Villa Foscari known as “La Malcontenta”

Villa Foscari is the first villa located on the road leading out of Venice. It is near Malcontenta, a small village next to the Lagoon, from which the villa has taken its nickname. This wonderful villa was built by Palladio around the first half of the 18th century for the Foscari brothers, Nicolò and Alvise, who then made it their summer residence. The monumental, grandiose architectural style is a reflection of the ancient power of the Foscari family, which was once one of the most important in Venice. The interiors are decorated by Battista Franco e Gian Battista Zelotti

Villa Widmann Rezzonico Foscari

This marvelous Villa is in Mira and was built on the wishes of the Scerimann family, an aristocratic Persian family, at the beginning of the 18th century. It was completed some decades later by the Widmann family, in a style that is reminiscent of the French Rococo fashion. The main lounge is a wonderful sight to see, full of frescoes by Giuseppe Angeli, a pupil of Giambattista Piazzetta, and Gerolamo Mengozzi Colonna, who worked with Tiepolo. The Villa is surrounded by huge gardens filled with cypress and horse-chestnut trees, interspersed by several stone statues of gods, nymphs and cupids. A Barchessa and a small church where Elisabetta and Arianna Widmann are buried are also part of the Villa’s buildings.

Barchessa Alessandri

The Barchessa at Villa Alessandri is located in Mira, right opposite the Brenta river. It is guarded by a gate topped by two huge busts

of the Emperors Caesar and Alexander, which were sculpted in honor of the villa's first owner, Cesare Alessandri.

The Barchessa is the home of a superb series of frescoes that have been attributed to Giannantonio Pellegrini, the person who inspired Tiepolo a few decades later. The remarkable frescoes depict a part of the tale of Ovid's Metamorphoses, such as the moment when Daphne turns into a tree to escape from Apollo.

Barchessa Valmarana

The Barchessa Valmarana stands on one of the prettiest sites on the Brenta Riviera, just a short distance from Mira. The Barchessa was originally part of Villa Valmarana, a building from the 16th century whose main structure was demolished at the beginning of the 20th century. The villa's two external buildings, which were once used as a warehouse and a lodge, survived the demolition. The latter was opened to the public after restoration work which uncovered the wonderful frescoes painted by Michelangelo Schiavoni, also known as "il Chiozzotto".

Villa Pisani

This is often thought to be the most magnificent, grandiose building on the Riviera. Villa Pisani is in Stra, about 8 km from Padua. It was built around 1720 in a style that brings together Classical and Baroque elements, producing an effect that is worthy of the palaces in Versailles and Caserta. Visitors to the Villa can still see the original furnishings in the 114 rooms and the magnificent frescoes painted by Gianbattista Tiepolo between 1760 and 1762 in the ballroom. The huge park surrounding the villa is filled with statues and buildings, such as the exedra, the archeological hill, the ice-house, the lemon-house and the stables.

Villa Foscari-Rossi

Villa Foscari-Rossi was built for the Foscari family around the end of the 16th century by

the famous architects Vincenzo Scamozzi, Francesco Contini and Giuseppe Jappelli, who followed a design by Andrea Palladio. The Villa is located in Stra, just a short distance from Villa Pisani. The Villa contains rooms that mingle Classical and Gothic elements, all filled with frescoes by pupils of Jappelli. The Villa also has two permanent exhibitions of the important Brenta shoemaking tradition.



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